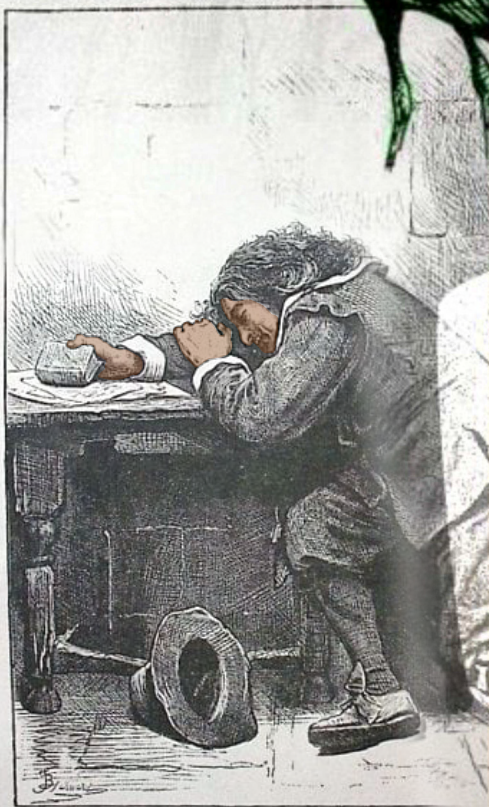


Food Not Bombs, Sydney
zine issue #3



Food
&
Thought



Food Not Bombs Sydney acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands whereon this zine was created. We pay respect to Ancestors and Elders past and emerging. We recognise the unique cultural and spiritual relationship and celebrate the contributions of First Nations peoples to the land.

All works submitted to this zine are of individuals perspectives and not indicative of Food Not Bombs Sydney's values as a whole.

One Murdered and Two Hospitalised in Attack on Food Not Bombs Reno

In Reno, Nevada, on the 3rd of April, 2023, a car drove into three women at a Food Not Bombs serve. All three were taken to the hospital, where Michelle “Mama Bear” Jardine, an unhoused woman, died from her injuries. The other two, FNB volunteers Diamond Roman and Clarissa Roman, mother and daughter, are both in hospital in a critical but stable condition.

The police allege that David Turner, aged 57, drove into the small group of people who were helping to feed those in need near the Nevada Cares Campus. He is facing one count of murder and two counts of attempted murder. Police officer Lt. Anthony Elges report, “The male driver made statements to officers that this incident was intentional.” While it is important to take official police statements with a grain of salt, I have found no statements or evidence that contradicts it. So, assuming the statement is true, what would compel someone to commit such a horrific attack? Unfortunately, when I first heard about this story I was saddened but not shocked. What occurred in Reno was the inevitable result of increasingly violent rhetoric from conservative media and hostile government policy from both Republican and Democrat politicians. In the past few years, the US’s homeless population have been the subject of a hate campaign, and this attack is the inevitable result of it. Across the country, cities have conducted ‘sweeps’ of homeless camps, attacking their property and attempting to drive them out of the cities, where they can suffer out of sight of the society that failed them.

Talking heads of the far right have played a key part in normalising¹ these sorts of attacks. Vehicle attacks have been increasingly common in the US, and in some states violent motorists have been absolved from charges if they run over protestors. In 2017, Heather Hayer was murdered by a white supremacist who ran her over in his car for counterprotesting the ‘Unite the Right’ rally. In the same year, Tucker Carlson’s website ‘The Daily Caller’, encouraged its readers to ‘study the technique’ of running over protestors as it “may prove useful in the next four years.” Tucker Carlson is a far-right commentator and the most popular cable news host in America. Carlson has also been a notable advocate for the war on homeless people, calling them “enemies of society”.

This attack on the homeless, particularly on those sleeping rough, clearly benefits the capitalist class, which is why corporate media likes to push it so often. The fear of homelessness disempowers the working class. The worse a society treats its unhoused population, the more the working class is going to try to keep their jobs, working hard to help the capitalist class grow richer and more powerful. It also suppresses dissent from the working class. Workers that are a missing pay check or two away from losing their housing aren’t going to go on strike or engage in protest that might get them arrested. In effect, the threat of homelessness sets a floor for the wages and conditions of the working class. The way homeless people are demonised in the US is particularly fascistic, in that they are directly associated with rubbish and waste. For example, the police call their raids on homeless encampments ‘sweeps’.

Ironically, the vast majority of the colossal amount of waste our society produces is due to capitalism's single-minded pursuit of profit, rather than conservation of our finite resources. Other myths of the homeless community are similarly hypocritical. They associate the unhoused with criminality, mental illness, and laziness. The corporate rulers who push this narrative make billions of dollars by compelling the working class to work for them and stealing the value we create in the form of profits. This isn't even counting the countless billions they make in wage theft and ignoring health, safety, and environmental regulations, all while controlling an economy that produces a ridiculous amount of waste and slowly destroying the only planet they can live on.

Criminal, delusional and lazy perfectly describe the capitalist class. What is conveniently ignored and suppressed in capitalist media is a solution to America's crisis to the unhoused. It's providing housing. Not only is it painfully logical, it's also proven to work in practice through countless trials and nation-wide policy in multiple cities across the world. Providing housing to the unhoused is the most beneficial solution both to unhoused individuals and society as a whole. It provides stability in people's lives, and prevents the wasted resources that go towards policing homelessness and reduces pressure on other public infrastructure such as hospitals. However, the real estate market requires the threat of a cruel life for those without housing to inflate the cost of renting or buying homes. And because of the increasing reliance on this market as the US economy deindustrialises, the real estate sector has had an increasing influence on politicians and policy. For the rich to stay rich, the poor must continue to suffer. This is particularly relevant to us in Sydney, whose renters have endured unbearable rent hikes from their landlords.

There are also more ideological reasons for this war on the unhoused. A significant reason conservatism despises the homeless is because of their worship of hierarchy. In the mind of

the conservative, everyone is in their current place in society because they deserve it. If you happen to be homeless, if you happen to be poor, or you happen to be worth \$100 billion, that is because you deserve it. While in reality this is ridiculous, this is the only way many in the ruling class can justify the cruel and unjust world they have created. Because of their influence these myths are spread throughout society, even to some who consider themselves 'moderate' or 'progressive'. It certainly seemed to have infected the mind of David Turner, leading to him attempting to murder people for being impoverished, and those who reject the unjust system that creates poverty. Turner is just one of many vigilantes who have murdered homeless people, but this act is particularly significant to me because it attacked a chapter of our organisation, Food Not Bombs.

Mutual aid organisations like Food Not Bombs reject the abusive hierarchy that controls our lives. We state that food is a right, not a privilege, and act on that belief by feeding each other for free. By doing this we challenge the notion that this hierarchy should exist at all. Because of this, and our anti-militarism stance, members of Food Not Bombs have faced political repression. The first Food Not Bombs was formed during the anti-nuclear weapon movement in 1980 and was continuously disrupted by police. In the past, Food Not Bombs has even been labelled a 'terrorist' organisation for protesting America's bloated military industrial complex. The state tends to be particularly threatened by organisations that attempt to unite the entire working class together against the ruling class. Both Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X were assassinated shortly after they were calling for solidarity between black and white members of the working class. MLK Jr. famously made a speech explaining how militarism, racism, and poverty were interconnected. Approximately half of the FBI's COINTELPRO budget, their division focused on suppressing organised, mostly left-wing political movements, was focused against the Black Panther Party.

The Panthers, while a key part of the Black Power movement, also networked with working class organisations of all races. Fred Hampton, leader of the Chicago branch of the Black Panther Party, famously formed a multiracial 'Rainbow Coalition' of various organisations in Chicago to challenge the government oppression. He was murdered in his sleep during a police raid. While they were a militant organisation, J. Edgar Hoover, head of the FBI, revealed in a leaked document that it was their Free Breakfast Program that made them a serious threat to the legitimacy of the US government.

The state is deeply threatened by movements that feed people and communities which take care of each other.

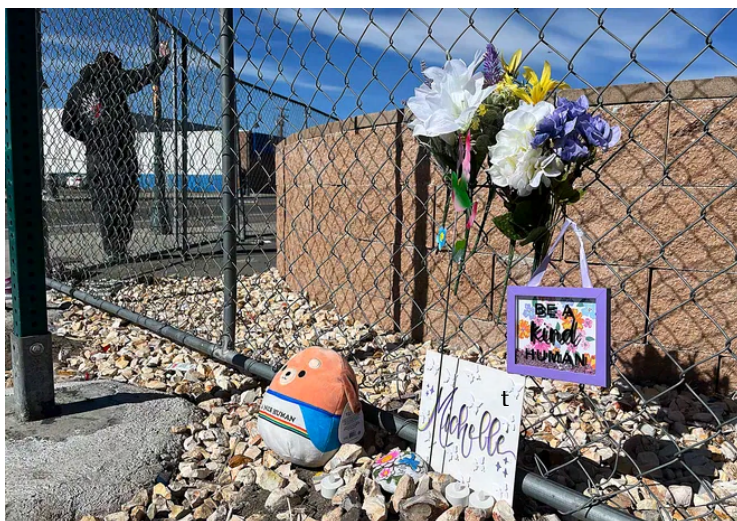
Even today, similar mutual aid organisations have been charged with laws aimed at preventing people from feeding the unhoused in public. In late 2022, Norma Thornton, a 78-year-old woman, was arrested and charged in Bullhead, Arizona, for feeding the unhoused in a public park. While her charges were eventually dropped, she plans to pursue legal action to make sure this law is no longer enforced in her city. In April 2022, 15 mutual aid volunteers were charged with 'felony littering', and five are currently on trial as of January 2023. Just days

before the deadly attack in Reno, in Houston, Texas, a member of Food Not Bombs was given a court notice for giving away food near a public library. These are just three notable recent examples of state repression against mutual aid. Fortunately, they are not letting state repression stop them, and continue to help feed people where they can.

A local affiliated organisation, Family Soup Mutual Aid, has organised a Go Fund Me for the victims and their families. Funds raised will go to paying for medical bills, financially assisting the Diamond and Clarissa as they recover, and any leftover money will be used to for community action and advocacy for the Reno unsheltered community. Fortunately, as of the 9th of April, over \$37,000 of their \$40,000 goal has been raised by comrades across the world.

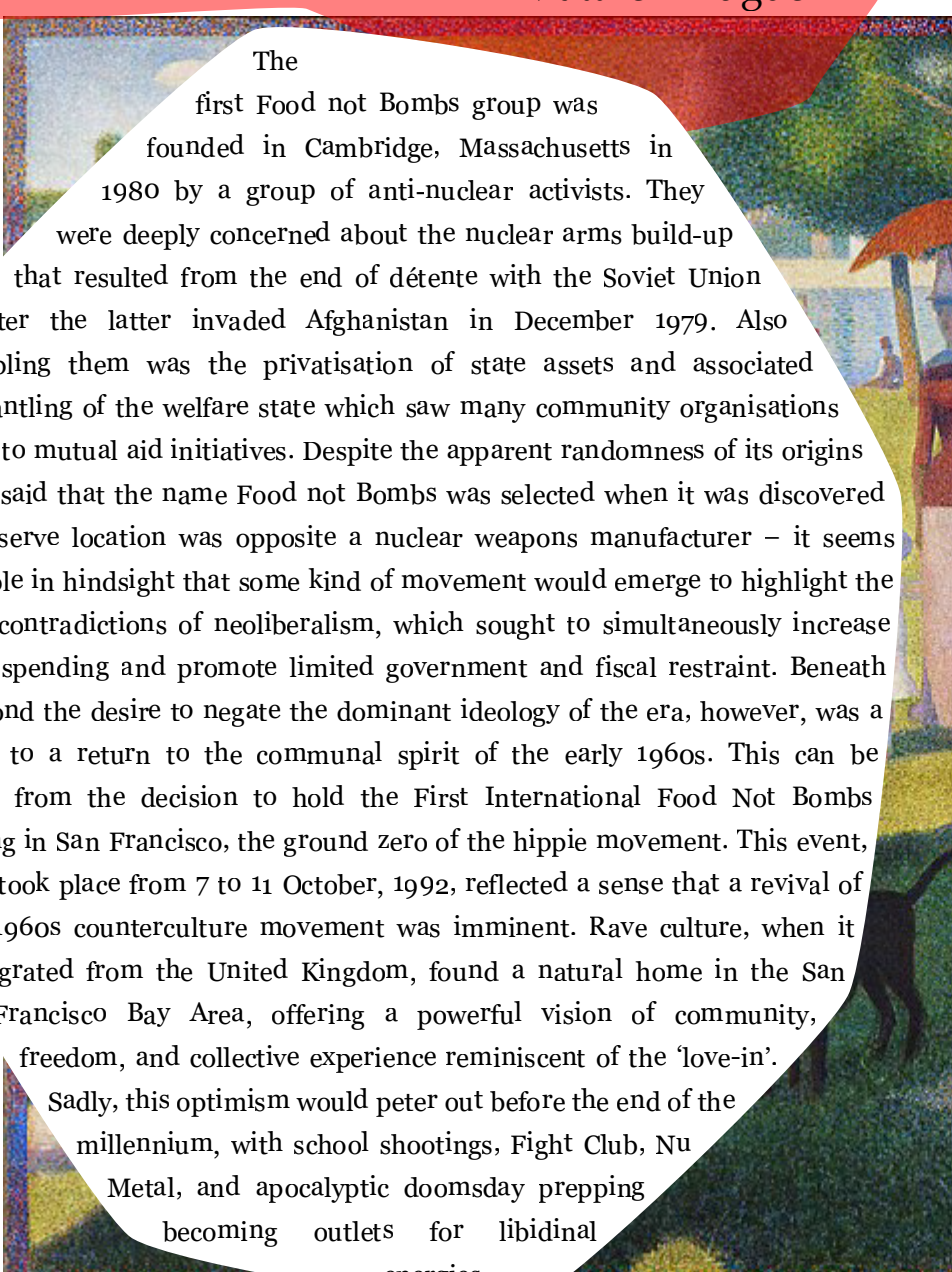
It is a reminder that although the ruling class and their cronies continue to preach hate and indifference towards our fellow humans, people still choose to act in solidarity with one another as we fight for a better world, one meal at a time.

Love and Solidarity,
O. Possum.



MUTUAL AID IS ABOUT HANGING OUT

by
Matthew Bugden



The first Food not Bombs group was founded in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1980 by a group of anti-nuclear activists. They were deeply concerned about the nuclear arms build-up that resulted from the end of détente with the Soviet Union after the latter invaded Afghanistan in December 1979. Also troubling them was the privatisation of state assets and associated dismantling of the welfare state which saw many community organisations resort to mutual aid initiatives. Despite the apparent randomness of its origins – it is said that the name Food not Bombs was selected when it was discovered that a serve location was opposite a nuclear weapons manufacturer – it seems inevitable in hindsight that some kind of movement would emerge to highlight the glaring contradictions of neoliberalism, which sought to simultaneously increase defence spending and promote limited government and fiscal restraint. Beneath and beyond the desire to negate the dominant ideology of the era, however, was a yearning to a return to the communal spirit of the early 1960s. This can be surmised from the decision to hold the First International Food Not Bombs Gathering in San Francisco, the ground zero of the hippie movement. This event, which took place from 7 to 11 October, 1992, reflected a sense that a revival of the 1960s counterculture movement was imminent. Rave culture, when it migrated from the United Kingdom, found a natural home in the San Francisco Bay Area, offering a powerful vision of community, freedom, and collective experience reminiscent of the ‘love-in’.

Sadly, this optimism would peter out before the end of the millennium, with school shootings, Fight Club, Nu Metal, and apocalyptic doomsday prepping becoming outlets for libidinal energies.



As though operating in a thirty-year cycle, the early 2020s represent the latest ‘return of the repressed’ that defined both the early 1960s and early 1990s. Even before Covid-19 there was a palpable sense, like the heaviness in the air preceding rain, that a major cultural realignment or ‘vibe shift’ was not far off. The journalist Rosie Spinks, writing for Quartz in April 2019, foresaw the crucial rupture occurring in the cultural sphere with the death of the ‘influencer’. She saw this odious figure, for whom “[w]ork is life, and getting paid to live your best life is the ultimate aspiration”, being knocked off their spot atop the hierarchy of coolness by some new iteration of the 90s ‘slacker’. And indeed we can affirm in 2024 that a new slacker did emerge from Covid: desperately, lonely, but with a crucial evolutionary adaptation that separated her from her grungy forebears: unlike the slackers of the 90s, the new slacker does not have a sense of herself as “stupid and contagious” and in need of constant, moment-to-moment entertainment. She looks at the junkie Kurt Cobain with the second-hand embarrassment that the latter felt for the dazed hippie flower-child of the 1960s. She feels only disgust and aversion towards her own ‘terminally online’ generation who rot in their bedrooms, scrolling their youth away. One recalls Nietzsche’s introduction to *On the Genealogy of Morals* when he says what precisely he finds intolerable, “Bad air! Bad air! That something foul comes near me; that I must inhale the putrid odour of the entrails of a rotten soul!”. This is not to say, however, that one needs to become an outdoorsman, nor an urban explorer, to ‘touch grass’ as a palliative. The naturalistic impulse is, in the final analysis, a regressive one. To join the ranks of the new slackers, one need only be capable of living without the drip-feed, the electric-blue feeding tube through which one receives synthetic dopamine.

But how would one spend one’s days if the tube were removed? I have heard this question, uttered with resentment, more times than I can count. Beneath this question is a feeling that one must do something, that one must be productive for the sake of productivity. Such people do not see - are incapable of seeing - that the compulsion to be productive, even if it is in the service of a ‘higher cause’, is merely a substitution for one’s lower drives, and as such has no intrinsic dignity but only a relative one. Before one can start to live - spontaneously, authentically, creatively - one must quite literally starve one’s will to activity to death. This is an inversion of the resocialisation method called for by Vladimir Lenin when he wrote that “[t]he old Oblomov [archetype lazy Russian] ... will have to be washed, cleaned, shaken and thrashed if something is to come of him”.

Only once one is capable of passing the day without achievement nor guilt for one’s lack thereof, can one engage in true mutual aid: the creation of ‘pure’ spaces, which Mark Fisher defines as ones “specifically dedicated to attending to one another: not (yet more)

The background is a vibrant, abstract painting. It depicts a village scene with several houses having orange-brown roofs and white walls, nestled among green trees. In the foreground, there are figures of people in various colorful outfits (red, green, brown, white) walking or standing on a path. The overall style is expressive and painterly, with visible brushstrokes and a rich color palette of greens, blues, purples, and earthy tones.

conferences, but sessions where people can share their feelings and ideas". Rather than 'events', these meetings should be in an impromptu Deleuzian (or simply Parisian) spirit – a spontaneous, happenstance convergence of lines on a plane, two travellers crossing paths in the desert. These spaces, once formed, will help the dopamine-deprived in attempting to fight the snares of 'addiction capitalism' (drugs and alcohol, psychotropic medications, online gambling, Pornhub, Tinder, TikTok, MMOs, SHEIN, and so on, in order of dopaminergic intensity) to ride out the dark days with sympathetic comrades-in-arms, living testimonials to the possibility of life after the feeding tube. If mutual aid in 2024 means anything, it is this.

Clogged

water flows in creeks contained by concrete
and it will flow for millenia after that
dissolving roads and etchings
marks we left on the world
we wanted to hold and keep
the deep deep lakes of our childhoods
but not the stars in the sky
fogged up by convenience
speeding past ancient experience
voices silenced by quiet suppression
forced by loud expression
to make their last stand
their proof of existence
to a judge jury and executioner
who cannot read the laws of the land

the truth that everyone knows
it's written in the sand
it's in the way water flows

the rocks would shout marvellous tales
of adventures and exploits
of volcanic implisions and explosions
and ruinous days of beasts
that tore and ate each others flesh
gnawing deeper and deeper till they consumed one another
all that was left, energy
that flows in deep pitch black
luxuriously splashing and staining
our hands and feet
washed through our hair
streaming down our backs
until it flows down the drain
dripping it's last drops

clogged.

energy bubbles and erupts
in deep jet mists
covering the bodies

an invisible venom
seeps through our streets
and the birds don't come here anymore

written by Uday Alexander

Latecomer written by Crabbi

I can't watch the flotilla. The despair had laid in wait for its opportunity to leap from the waves and drag me under. "I can't believe we still need this. There will always be so many cops. I'm tired."

I cut off my snatched leg and leave the beach before the rest is taken.

I retreat to the Queer Tent: a kaleidoscopic, cushioned marquee with free condoms and lube on a clothed table, next to jars of minted water. Reclining on a foam mattress kindly loaned to me by a stranger overnight, I try to rescue the bleeding stump of my leg. My gauze is our world to come, in which being caught for the night by an unknown individual's generosity is not so rare. Our world where there is always warmth, food, and patience to spare for disorganised latecomers like me. Our world we can afford to bring kids into.

My childrens' air is clean, and the frequencies that travel through it are not accompanied by the endless cacophony of traffic and flight paths. I count all the different birdsongs, melodic over the chordal drone of cicadas. My children are found in a late afternoon sun; clouds of gnats, bees, moths, and butterflies are illuminated in golden rays. There is grass and dandelion fluff in their curls, and they blink away pollen from their lashes. One lets out a sneeze, but no fear rises in me for illness. I think of my mother's soup, and miss her. How relieved she would've been to know that, at last, her recipe was enough to soothe what hurts. I take a headstart on returning home with her in mind, preparing dinner early and slow. Someone will send the kids home when it's time -- most of the neighbours know when we eat now.

I think of my unborn children and I think of their mother, softly crying into the surprising comfort of loaned foam. Their two scenes could still meet somewhere in the middle. I hope. A sharp breeze carries me back to myself and... I hear the flotilla has managed to turn a coal ship around.



ACAB
FUCK COLONISERS
MAKE FOOD, NOT WAR

<https://fnbsydney.org>

BE GAY
DO CRIME



ALWAYS
CARRY
A
BOOK

WE ARE NATURE
DEFENDING
ITSELF



PEOPLE
OVER
PROFIT

the EARTH
needs
RADICALS
more



2025

EAT AGAINST
THE MACHINE

SOLIDARITY
IS STRENGTH



ALWAYS WAS
ALWAYS WILL BE